

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 4306

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SN, ID

SUBJECT: FORMER AMBASSADOR GALBRITH'S REPORT OF HIS MEETING WITH
PRIME MINISTER LEE AND FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM

1. FORMER AMBASSADOR GALBRAITH CALLED ON CHARGE SEPTEMBER 15
TO CONVEY SUBSTANCE OF MEETINGS HE HAD WITH PRIME MINISTER
LEE AND FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM ON SEPTEMBER 14.
AMBASSADOR GALBRAITH NOTED THAT MINISTER OF STATE,
K.C. LEE, AN OLD FRIEND FROM JAKARTA DAYS, HAD BEEN
AWARE THAT HE WOULD BE STOPPING BRIEFLY IN SINGAPORE ON
BUSINESS PRIOR TO PROCEEDING TO JAKARTA. ON HIS ARRIVAL
IN SINGAPORE, HE FOUND THAT K.C. LEE WAS IN EUROPE AND
THAT PRIME MINISTER LEE WANTED TO SEE HIM. APPOINTMENTS
HAD BEEN ARRANGED (APPARENTLY BY K.C. LEE) FOR HIM TO SEE
BOTH LEE AND RAJA.

2. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF LEE'S COMMENTS TO GALBRAITH:

A. INDONESIA

LEE WAS VERY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE OIL
INDUSTRY IN INDONESIA AND ITS OVER-ALL IMPACT ON INDONESIA'S
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. HE ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER
THE EFFECT WHICH THIS HAS ALREADY HAD ON OFFSHORE OIL
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COMPANIES BASED IN SINGAPORE. HE PRESSED AMBASSADOR

GALBRAITH FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE SUHARTO GOVERNMENT AND ITS CAPACITY TO COME TO GRIPS WITH INDONESIAN PROBLEMS. GALBRAITH NOTED THAT HE HAD NOT YET BEEN TO INDONESIA AND MADE A SUITABLY CAUTIOUS RESPONSE. HE DID INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT HANKAM WAS CONCERNED OVER THE REDUCTION IN U.S. MILITARY AID. THIS PROMPTED LEE TO COMMENT THAT THE GOI SHOULD BE WORRIED ABOUT THE ECONOMY AND WHETHER PEOPLE WOULD GET ENOUGH TO EAT RATHER THAN CONCERNING ITSELF WITH THE ACQUISITION OF MORE MILITARY HARDWARE.

B. U.S. ELECTIONS

LEE PRESSED GALBRAITH FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF WHAT A POSSIBLE CARTER VICTORY MIGHT MEAN IN TERMS OF FUTURE U.S. FOREIGN POLICY. WHEN GALBRAITH SAID HE DID NOT THINK FOREIGN POLICY WOULD CHANGE VERY MUCH, LEE TOOK A MORE PESSIMISTIC LINE, EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER CARTER'S COMMENTS ABOUT WITHDRAWING TROOPS FROM KOREA AND THE TENDENCY OF CARTER'S ADVISORS TO FOCUS ON EUROPE AND IGNORE THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. DURING THE DISCUSSION, LEE COMMENTED GLOOMILY THAT THE U.S. WAS NOT LIVING UP TO ITS LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE FREE WORLD.

C. CHINA

GALBRAITH WAS IMPRESSED AT HOW CONFIDENTLY LEE SPOKE OF THE SITUATION IN CHINA AND HOW MUCH HE SEEMED TO HAVE GOTTEN OUT OF HIS RECENT VISIT THERE. ALTHOUGH LEE WAS IMPRESSED WITH WHAT HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IN CHINA, HE ALSO COMMENTED ON THE GRAYNESS OF EVERYTHING AND THE LACK OF SPONTANEITY WHICH MUST CURB CREATIVITY. LEE CONSIDERED HUA KUO-FENG TO BE TOUGH, QUIET AND CAPABLE AND THOUGHT THAT THE MODERATES WOULD PROBABLY PREVAIL IN ANY FUTURE POWER STRUGGLE.

D. SOVIET UNION

IN LEE'S VIEW THE SOVIETS WERE EXPANDING THEIR INFLUENCE
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EVERYWHERE THEY COULD AND WERE USING THE VIETNAMESE AND LAO TO SUBVERT THE THAIS, WHO WERE RESPONDING LACKADAISICALLY TO THE THREAT.

3. IN A SEPARATE MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER, RAJARATNAM REITERATED MANY OF THE SAME VIEWS WHICH HE HAD RECENTLY EXPRESSED TO AMBASSADOR HOLDRIDGE (SINGAPORE 4016). HOWEVER, RAJA DID ASK GALBRAITH WHY THE INDONESIANS

APPEARED TO BE SOMEWHAT LESS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT REGIONALISM THAN THEY HAD BEEN HERETOFORE. GALBRAITH REPLIED THAT IF THIS WERE THE CASE, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY THE TIMOR EPISODE AND THE CRISIS IN PERTAMINA WHICH MAY HAVE CAUSED THE GOI TO SUFFER A TEMPORARY LOSS OF SELF-CONFIDENCE.

4. GALBRAITH COMMENTED THAT HE FOUND PRIME MINISTER LEE TO BE JUST AS MENTALLY ALERT, PHYSICALLY FIT, PROVOCATIVE AND ARTICULATE AS HE HAD ALWAYS BEEN.
GRANAD

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